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AUTHOR	DeYoung, Alan J.; McKenzie, Roberta C.
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ABSTRACT

The role of schooling in the economic development process has been targeted as essential in both human capital theory and modernization theories. Research into the nature of underdevelopment in Central Appalachia has provided a basis for debate among regional scholars as to its causes and consequences, yet serious discussion of pre-modern structural conditions of many rural and Appalachian schools is almost non-existent. This paper briefly reviews the themes and theories surrounding the underdevelopment issue, and provides an illustrative case study on the economics and politics of underdevelopment in the East Tennessee school district of "Clinch County." The results suggest that: (1) historically, schooling was largely controlled by local families, churches or "outside" missionary forces, and contemporary public education is still influenced by this tradition; (2) the school system has been poorly financed and lacks facility and staff; (3) many modern and professional educational characteristics are visibly lacking, reflected in poor administrative policies and leadership; and (4) modernization models that posit schools as an independent force in the development process should take more factors into consideration, such as historical, cultural, economic, and political circumstances surrounding public education. This paper includes a list of 58 references. (ALL)

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Education and "Modernization" in Appalachia: With a Case Study of the Economics and Politics of Underdevelopment in an East Tennessee School District[1]

Alan J. DeYoung

and

Roberta C. McKenzie

The University of Kentucky

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Abstract

Factors associated with economic development have long been an interest of both economists and sociologists. Economists have historically assumed that rational decision making on the part of individuals would lead to economic, social and personal growth, while sociologists have been equally interested in the non-rational personal and institutional concomitants of economic development. The latest "consensus" interpretations of factors related to the development process in economics and sociology have been human capital theory and modernization theories, respectively. Importantly, the role of schooling in the economic development process has been targeted as essential both internationally and (now) domestically in both theories, even as these theories have been seriously criticized within the academic community.

While domestic underdevelopment has garnered some academic attention, serious inquiry into the dynamics of American rural schools related to such underdevelopment is rarely available. Research into the nature of underdevelopment in Central Appalachia, for example, has provided a rich debate among regional scholars as to its causes and consequences, yet serious discussion of "pre-modern" structural conditions of many rural and/or Appalachian schools is almost non-existent. The following paper attempts to briefly review the above themes, as well as to provide an illustrative case study on the economics and politics of underdevelopment in one East Tennessee school district.

Education and 'Modernization' in Appalachia: With a Case Study of the Economics and Politics of Underdevelopment in an East Tennessee School District

Theoretical interest in the value of "human resources" to national economic development has been present in various social science and economics writings since at least the political economists of Adam Smith's day. And by the early twentieth century, a variety of theoretical and empirical efforts to quantify both the value of worker skills, as well as personality factors related to economic development, were quite visible throughout these disciplines (e.g. Smith, 1937; Kiker, 1966; Durkheim, 1964; Weber, 1930). Importantly, while economists were primarily interested in quantifying physical and cognitive skills demanded by the emerging division of labor, sociological interest more centrally focused on both the rational and non-rational personal and institutional qualities demanded by the emerging social relations of production, industrialization and urbanization.

Debates over the personal qualities "required" for economic development increasingly filled the pages of academic journals early in this century, yet it wasn't until the late 1950s that much of this work (particularly, human capital theory) was seen to have public policy implications connecting academic scholarship with economic development and social "progress" (e.g., Blaug, 1964; Denison, 1974; Bowman 1966; Schultz (1961).

Sociological Perspectives on the Role of the School in Economic Development

While human capital theory specifically identified the productive potential of schooling in the economic development process, sociologists (primarily located within the Durkheimian tradition) had long argued that public and state controlled education was (and ought to be) a key factor in building social cohesion within societies experiencing an ever-increasing division of labor. Important sociologists (including Durkheim) specifically argued for the "moral" imperative of public common schooling for children in western nations experiencing the anomic conditions related to dramatic technological and social change (e.g., Durkheim, 1961; Ward, 1883; Dewey, 1899).

Relatedly, interpretations outlining the function of secondary schools as sites to equip future workers with the attitudes and values (as well as skills) required for their future locations within an elaborate division of labor were also explicated by various sociologists of education following WWII (e.g. Brim, 1958; Brim and Wheeler, 1966; Parsons, 1959; Dreeben, 1968). Dreeben, in particular, argued that the primary function of American schools was to instill the norms of achievement, independence, universalism, and specificity into children by themselves operating according to such principles.

As in the case of economics, however, the sociological discourse over factors related to economic development only infrequently pervaded either national or international policy

arenas until the middle of the twentieth century. Rather, most social science was viewed as ameliorative at best: its perspectives might help those lost in the race to modernity, but not contribute to the process of growth itself. Put another way, sociology (and the sociology of education) might help policy makers address American "social problems," but rarely was any sociological equivalent of the economists "production function" heard in policy discussions before the 1960s (Tyack, 1974; Kliebard, 1986; Perkinson, 1968).

Yet, perspectives relating the value of human skills to economic development has led policy makers in many countries since the 1960s to call for upgrading human resources as one component of such development (Blaug, 1985, Thurow, 1983). Relatedly, "modernization" theories, which (following in the Durkheimian tradition) focus on the social and psychological components of modernity and development, emerged as widely popular social science contributions during approximately the same period (Black, 1966; DeYoung, 1989).

The concept of psycho-social "modernity" posits that in addition to the technical skills (i.e., human capital) required for industrial development, a particular set of values, motives, norms and attitudes are required for the establishment and/or maintenance of a modern technological society (e.g.; Atkinson and Hoselitz, 1970; Parsons, 1967). Importantly, many modernity theorists suggest that educational institutions can be important sites for the promulgation of technical skills as well as both

modern (instrumental) values and beliefs in social progress (through democratic processes) in advance of structural changes in local economies (Inkeles and Smith, 1974; Shipman, 1971).

A representative working list of modern personality characteristics ostensibly related to individual modernity and contributed to by participation in formal schooling is available in works like those of Alex Inkeles and his colleagues (e.g., Inkeles and Smith, 1974; Inkeles and Holsinger, 1974). For example, Inkeles, et al, argue that "modern" individuals are (among other things): open to new experiences, accepting and ready for social change, able to reflect on issues and form independent judgments, interested in acquiring information and fact, oriented toward the future as opposed to the past; have a sense of mastery over the environment, believe in the value of future planning, have an appreciation of technical skills, and have high educational and occupational aspirations.

Conversely, modernity theorists typically postulate that individuals locked into more "traditional" societies typically: are less interested in new experiences; uninterested in social change; more likely to form and hold opinions based on the beliefs held by others in the tribe and or kinship systems; uninterested in acquiring knowledge for its own sake; value the past more than the future; are more fatalistic than optimistic regarding the human ability to control future events; place less value on occupational specialization and competence; and have low educational and occupational aspirations.

Weaknesses/Criticism of Modernity and Human Capital Theories

While the theoretical logic(s) described above have led to innumerable school reform blueprints and accountability efforts in the U.S and around the world, a number of contemporary economists and sociologists have taken some effort to point out practical and conceptual weaknesses in both human capital and modernization theories. Human Capital theory, for example, has been targeted as too imprecise for developing school building policies in developing countries beyond the provision of basic education for all children. Arguments about relative rates of return to those educated to secondary, higher, or vocational education still rage among educational economists, as do methodological disputes about how to calculate such rates (e.g. Bluestone, 1972; Klees, 1986; Rumberger, 1981). Even some academics earlier associated with the unlimited possibilities of human capital theory for educational upgrading have backed away from oversimplifications of its utility in educational planning (e.g., Blaug, 1987; Psacharopoulos, 1986). Relatedly, a few prominent economists generally sympathetic with human capital arguments suggest that unqualified educational upgrading policies within most advanced economic systems (like the U.S.) typically underinvest in the secondary and post-secondary vocational programs of most utility in industrial expansion efforts (Thurow, 1985).

Theoretical critiques of economic development models based on human capital and modernization theories also became readily

available during the late 1960s and 1970s. For example, many argued that paths to modernity and development were at best culturally biased against previously viable traditional social systems, and frequently argued that "culturally imperialist" motives underlaid economic/educational development projects sponsored by western international development organizations (e.g.; Berger, 1977; Berman, 1983).

Relatedly, intriguing alternative theories to those accepting both human capital and modernization theories developed to extend earlier colonialism perspectives. Such alternatives (e.g., World Systems Theory), attempted to account for the lack of development among many less developed countries which had by the 1980s experienced little if any economic growth at all (e.g., Frank, 1978; Wallerstein, 1974 & 1980). Specifically, such theories posit that "underdeveloped" national economies controlled by (and dependent upon) fully developed ones were doomed to different sorts of "development" patterns than either human capital and/or modernity theorists adhered to.

Development and Dependency Models in Appalachia

For the most part, research and scholarship on correlates of economic development (and underdevelopment) continues to take place in the international arena. Yet, pockets of economically and "culturally" underdeveloped areas of the U.S. (specifically in Appalachia and the rural South) began to receive journalistic attention by the turn of the twentieth century (e.g., Shapiro, 1978); were "officially" recognized by at least 1933, when

legislation creating the Tennessee Valley Authority was passed (Whisnant, 1980); and have become a major focal point among many regional sociologists, anthropologists and economists in America since the "War on Poverty" days (Walls and Stephenson, 1972).

In Appalachia, scholarship on sociological and economic factors related to underdevelopment has primarily concentrated on the mountainous regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia; areas which for the most part remain rural, isolated and impoverished. Settled primarily by westward moving Scotch-Irish settlers in the early nineteenth century, subsistence agriculture and minimal small scale trade via navigable rivers enabled some settlers to acquire and settle valleys and hollows in the hills. The marginal agricultural utility of most mountain land insured that many early settlements were quite different from either plantation economies to the east, west and south; and lack of transportation facilities into the mountains importantly isolated such regions from the northern industrial states as well (Billings, 1988).

By the turn of the twentieth century, however, much of central Appalachia had become the target of northern industrial expansion. Initially, the region's virgin timber attracted northern investors seeking high grade timber for construction and furniture industries to the north. Later, the driving force behind most heavy manufacturing in the U.S. was discovered in central Appalachia: coal. Unfortunately, neither the region nor its leaders were well prepared for the onslaught of land

speculators and organized energy companies which began to penetrate and dominate a region with well established small scale farming and rural community values based on multiple generations of mountain existence (Eller, 1983; Caudill, 1963).

Yet, while many outside investors appear to have been eager to exploit mountain dwellers in the pursuit of late nineteenth and early twentieth century (national) economic development potentials, others were also concerned about the social and personal "backwardness" of many Appalachians "rediscovered" during the rush to extract their timber and mineral rights. That is, not only was the region viewed as economically backward, but as well, its people were typically viewed either as quaint reminiscences of our colonial ancestors, or as misguided hillbillies out of touch with the social demands for American social progress (Eller, 1982; Shapiro, 1978).

During the 1960s, at about the same time economic development and psycho-social modernization theories became prevalent in discussions over international development strategies, Appalachia and its "uneven development" patterns were also "rediscovered" by academics and state and federal policy makers (Whisnant, 1980; Walls and Stephenson, 1972). And with much debate, a variety of development assistance programs were attempted in the region from the 1960s (typically funded from federal sources): and many still continue. Programs theoretically designed to enhance economic development possibilities during the past several decades came from such

agencies as the Area Redevelopment Administration and the Office of Economic Opportunity, while currently both the Tennessee Valley Authority and Appalachian Regional Commission operate (scaled back) economic development programs in the region (Whisnant, 1980).

Modernizing the Mountaineer

Efforts to enhance the economic development of central Appalachia may have marginally aided the region, but the most rural Appalachians typically fall short of the national average in the U.S. on most indicators of personal income, household income, health care, housing and education (Billings, 1988; DeYoung, 1983; Tickameyer and Tickameyer, 1987). Among scholars of the region, the perceived inadequacy of "official" development efforts over the past thirty years has led to a substantial body of regional literature likening the Appalachian situation to that of an internal colony within the U.S. (e.g., Lewis, Johnson and Askins, 1978; Gaventa 1980). Not surprisingly, such scholarship typically proposes a variety of alternative and indigenous liberation mechanisms as essential for Appalachia to remove itself from dependency upon the control and dominance of corporate America.

On the other hand, closing the gap between Appalachia and the rest of the nation has more conventionally been pursued within the region since the 1960s by hoping to modernize its people via enhanced educational opportunities, skill development and heightened occupational expectations. Furthermore, the

governors of each of the central Appalachian states during the past decade have tied statewide economic development efforts to improved schooling outcomes within the rural and Appalachian areas of their states (e.g., Fowler, 1987; National Governor's Association, 1986).

Education and Economic Development in Appalachia

While increasing educational outcomes has been targeted as a primary way to enhance development in Appalachia (as it has in the rest of the U.S.), most of the limited scholarship related to education and economic growth/social change in the U.S. has been historical in nature. Furthermore, much of this literature suggests (if anything) an inverse relationship between economic growth and schooling: i.e., that increased years of schooling in the U.S. has followed (rather than preceded) economic development (e.g., Katz, 1971; Collins, 1971; Tyack, 1971).

The lack of available scholarship on the relationship between economic underdevelopment and formal education in the U.S. probably stems from several sorts of omissions/biases in domestic scholarship. On the one hand, some suggest that in the U.S., urban and metropolitan school dynamics have been focal concerns, and a normative bias against researching the dynamics of rural schools has left them only as targets for continued urban inspired "improvements" (e.g. Sher, 1977; DeYoung, 1987).

Furthermore, most domestic research on school variables related to student learner outcomes have been primarily based on quantitative analyses of newly available large data sets: data

sets that by their very nature cannot systematically assess the historical, cultural and/or political nature of schooling in rural America. Instead, financial, staffing, and achievement data collected in (for example) dollars, years of experience and achievement test scores have been manipulated via sophisticated regression and path analytical procedures in attempts to determine the impact of various quantifiable "resources" on learner outcomes (e.g., Bidwell and Kasarda, 1975; Alexander and Griffin, 1975; Jencks, 1972). The "Effective Schools" research not withstanding, most of these analyses have suggested that student background characteristics, and (to some degree) local financial resources available for schooling are the best predictors of learner success (e.g., Coleman, 1966; Hannan, Freeman and Meyer, 1975; Naftaly and Biniaminov, 1981).

However, while the research base upon which to understand the dynamics and structural characteristics of many rural schools (including those in Appalachia) is itself underdeveloped, nevertheless schools here are currently charged with spearheading regional economic change. In the Appalachian case, policy makers frequently argue that the lack of appropriate values and attitudes toward work and economic development is a (if not <u>the</u>) primary development problem. The mountaineers themselves are not modern, so the argument goes, and thus remain unable to develop strong local economies. Importantly, over the past two decades, the school system has been turned to as a resource in the bid to modernize traditional values and teach the human resource skills

necessary for Appalachians to compete in the industrial (and post industrial) world.

The logic behind the hypothetical ability and utility of public schooling to confer modern values and skills in rural Appalachia was perhaps best articulated by the sociologists Schwarzweller and Brown in the early 1960s. In an important essay authored in 1960, these researchers argued that schools were ideally situated in the mountains to provide a bridge for children from isolated and tradition-bound villages to the "great society." Echoing modernity theorists working internationally under the sponsorship of the World Bank, AID, UNESCO, etc., Schwarzweller and Brown suggested that a major cause of Appalachian underdevelopment was that the kinship, political and economic systems of Appalachia continued to instill character traits among the region's youth which were inappropriate for their integration into the increasingly available outside world. The school, they argued, could become a cultural bridge from this agrarian/kinship centered Appalachian subculture to "the great society," because the formal policies and practices of the school, coupled with the more cosmopolitan role models of university trained teachers, could provide for mountain youth an access to the skills, values and attitudes they needed to journey from an outmoded past into the future. Importantly, they argued, the school is an institutional complex situated within and supported by the local community but directly tied to the Great Society; it "is a natural and strategic center for the diffusion

of Great Society norms" (Schwarzweller and Brown, 1960: 367).

Significantly, not only the teachings, but also the organization of instruction was touted by these authors (and others) as enabling mountain children to become more modern. High school, for example, signifies both the importance of academic knowledge and the organization of such knowledge into compartments of expertise. Not surprisingly the social teaching of modern education and its theoretical link to the requirements of modern society as touted in Appalachia is quite consistent with both functionalist writings of Parsons and Dreeben earlier cited, as well as with the myriad of human capital and modernity theory consultants (still) working in "developing" countries.

Understanding the History of Appalachian Education

To be sure, not all economic development efforts in Appalachia are centered on public school reform. Yet, belief in the power of public schooling in the mountains to independently bring modernization and progress to the region's children persists in both the popular media and among regional politicians. Significantly, proposed and actual school reforms in many Appalachian school systems have occurred during this decade, and have been targeted exactly at schooling practices there which puzzle elites in the cosmopolitan centers of each state (e.g., Fowler, 1987; State Research Associates, 1988).

Many state school leaders chastise local educational officials for allowing such things as nepotism, factional politics, lack of instructional orientation, inordinate amounts

of time students frequently spend in sporting activities, and the lack of careful bookkeeping procedures seen in many rural school districts. Modern and efficient public school systems do not operate in such ways, say state legislatures and educational policy advisors attuned to the professional literature. And in all four Appalachian states, respective departments of education and/or Governors' offices have launched accountability crusades against either academically and/or administratively "bankrupt" school systems.

But of course, the point is that the schools in many rural and economically disadvantaged areas of the U.S. are probably not modern by conventional standards (although most would certainly compare favorably to schools in the Third World). True, state financial subsidies, teacher certification requirements, school consolidation efforts and state recommended textbooks etc. have all moved most rural schools in Appalachia towards "modernity". And quantitatively speaking, most rural schools at least approximate other systems in their state(s) and the nation. Yet, the political, non-intellectual, athletic and community service practices seen in many rural and Appalachian schools illustrate what many American educators and policy makers ought to already know: that the history and social functions of many rural schools reflect many pre-modern institutional dynamics and practices rather than modern ones. Furthermore, educational dynamics in many rural schools (like those described below) suggest that understanding the functioning, problems and/or reform of many

district (AEL, 1987). In many ways, the "school-community partnership model" evaluated was driven by stereotypically "modern" notions of the nature of school improvement: it assumed (for example) that school improvement is always desireable; that such improvement ought to be based on objective data; that shared decision making is beneficial; and that outside expertise can help bring about locally desired changes.

The methodology employed in our evaluation was of a case study nature, which included both historical and ethnographic data related to the question: was there a positive relationship developed between school and community leaders, as facilitated by the school-community improvement model developed by the Appalachia Educational Lab (which ran the project). In order to compare school/community collaborative efforts in each of four participating districts, researchers spent hundreds of hours interviewing school and community leaders on dynamics of each system; reviewing both official and unofficial school documents; and collecting/reading various locally produced historical records related to the evolution and development of each school system in the study (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Stake, 1978). In what follows, a brief overview of the historical and sociological background of one district is presented, with specific reference to how religious, economic development and political dynamics in the county in question has played (and continues to play) an important role in the school system there.

Paranthetically, we judged the school improvement iniative

American rural schools must give more systematic consideration to the sociological, economic and cultural settings where many such schools operate.

A Case Study from East Tennessee

Most policy leaders as well as social scientists appear to concur with Schwarzweller and Brown: because schools typically are taught by university trained teachers with outward orientations, they by definition can provide a "cultural bridge" between rural Appalachia and mainstream America. Yet, in many ways, local and rural schools in Appalachia pre-date the coming of industry and an industrial consciousness responsible for school forms and reforms in the metropolitan U.S. Structural and cultural differences between metropolitan schools and many of those in Appalachian are many and various. They frequently have very different histories; contain different types of students; are governed by school board members with very different backgrounds; have different sorts of buildings; rely on (typically) less local financial support; and relate to local economies and governments in quite different ways. Rather than to speak in continued generalities, however, we have chosen at this point to describe what we believe is a not atypical Appalachian school district included in a recent evaluation study completed for OERI.

In essence, our evaluation was to be of a system which chose to participate in school improvement efforts related to bringing residents of the county into a problem solving role for the local

in "Clinch County" a relative failure (compared to the other three), for reasons germane to concerns of this paper. Yet, we do not dwell on the particulars of that project here: rather, we are interested in describing some of the cultural, economic, and political dynamics of this school system to illustrate conceptual categories thus far outlined. In order to protect the anonymity of the actual system under review, the name of the district has been changed in the following discussion, and published data and historical records which informed much of the following are not cited.

Clinch County Tennessee: A (Very) Brief Economic History

Clinch County, Tennessee was settled from the east in the late 18th century primarily by Scotch-Irish pioneers from by Virginia and North Carolina. The county lies just to the southeast of Kentucky and borders on the tip of western Virginia in the Cumberland Gap area. From the beginning, this county has been far removed from avenues of transportation and communication, which apparently did not harm its economic development when its residents and those of surrounding counties were primarily engaged in subsistence agriculture.

Not having any navigable rivers, railroads or even paved highways until the 1940s seriously undermined local efforts to adapt to an industrial economy in the twentieth century. As a result, a population base in excess of 11,000 residents in 1940 has dwindled today to one of just over 6,000. And most remaining residents with full time employment work currently in low paying

industries, commuting up to two hours per day over several steep ridges which separate Clinch from its neighboring counties.

Currently, Clinch County is among the poorest counties in the state, and in 1980 the median household income there was less than $6,700. Furthermore, compared to most counties in Tennessee, Clinch Countians depend much more on state assistance and other forms of transfer payments for this income. While the state average of income sources from transfer payments was approximately 5% in 1986, Clinch County residents "earned" over 23% of their local incomes from this source. Not surprisingly, over 20% of county workers work in service related industries. This is particularly telling when one considers that for the most part there are few retail services in the county: rather, most service workers are employed either by the school system, the courthouse, the hospital, or the local nursing home.

Clinch County has historically been the object of external economic development agencies. For example, several New Deal programs operated out of the county seat in the 1930s, and in fact built the first consolidated elementary school there. As well, the TVA has been responsible for decades for various economic development projects (typically related to energy). And numerous development efforts funded by regional, state and federal agencies have occurred frequently in Clinch County since the war on poverty days. Many of these have involved promoting various sorts of tourism in what is arguably one of the most beautiful rural settings in Appalachia.

Public Education in Clinch County

Public education as we know it probably did not exist in Clinch County until the turn of the twentieth century. As in other Southern states, only orphans and indigent children were considered in need of public assistance for education during most of the nineteenth century. Thus the systematic provision of schooling for most Tennessee children did not occur until well after reconstruction governments had been run out of office in the 1870s. Furthermore, since the South took years to recover economically from the devastation of the civil war, local and state appropriations for schools rarely covered costs until the first decade of the twentieth century (Allison, 1983; Folmsbee, Corlew and Mitchell, 1960).

Meanwhile, plantation owners and other elites were able before 1860, and to some extent after 1880, to fund numerous academies for their children. And much money targeted by state legislatures in Tennessee for education went in that state to institutions of higher learning which these academies prepared students for. As opposed to educational developments in the north and the midwest, in other words, elementary schools and in particular high schools were late coming to rural Tennessee, including places like Clinch County.

Importantly, some local communities (frequently comprised of one or two extended and interrelated families) were able to construct and staff small one and two room schools in East Tennessee in the early twentieth century. Yet, just as

importantly, many of these schools were constructed on private property donated by these families and frequently maintained by them for the county. Importantly, in other words, many of these local schools in places like Clinch County had particularistic ties well into the twentieth century, unlike schools in growing cities of the U.S. which were owned, maintained and held accountable by city governments.

Furthermore, where strong "outside" control of schools was experienced in much of rural Appalachia, the outside forces willing to pay and staff schools were frequently missionary church organizations reaching into the hollows of Appalachia in service to God. And once again, civic and secular responsibility for public education was importantly displaced in such instances.

The case of Clinch County is illustrative. For example, the majority of early "public" schools in this county not built and maintained by local families and small local churches before the 1930s were run either by Baptist or Presbyterian Missions. In point of fact, one of these denominations took over the county's private academy when it went bankrupt near the turn of the century. It was sold back to the county board of education in the 1920s, when state appropriations made the running of a public high school possible for the first time. So too, a relatively prominent landholder donated a piece of land to the Presbyterian ministry in the early 1900s for the express purpose of building a school there which would also perform religious instruction. And this school provided the first education made available to many

of the rural poor in one end of the county prior to WWII.

Briefly restated, the historical evidence of the provision of education in Clinch County suggests that in many ways the secular and public orientations of most (metropolitan) American schools by the mid-twentieth century were seriously compromised there. Owing to its economic marginality, the legacy of the civil war, the strength of the region's churches, and the general skepticism expressed by rural Southerners toward public schools, educational processes and outcomes were until quite recently probably much more "traditional" than is frequently assumed among educational scholars in the U.S.

Of course, it could be argued that such dynamics reflect the history of education, and ought to have little place in contemporary educational analysis. Yet, even though schools in Clinch County have changed quite a bit since the 1930s, in many ways its school system is still seriously influenced by the county's previous traditions as well as its current economic and political "underdevelopment." For example, over 95% of all Clinch County residents remain active participants in dozens of small county (all protestant) churches. Relatedly, since the "new" consolidated schools in Clinch County are the only large buildings in the vicinity, occasionally church functions (like wedding receptions) too large for these small churches are moved into the schools with the approval of local board members. As well, while there are typically dozens of social events held throughout the year in many Clinch County schools, local church

events are always taken into consideration before scheduling after school activities. Never, for example, will a school social gathering be planned during the same weekend as a local church revival meeting. And as in many rural communities, local church representatives are still invited to speak and/or lead students in prayer at most extra-curricular school functions.

Geographic isolation also continues to play a role in the provision of education in Clinch County. Since modern (two lane) highways in the county were not built until the late 1940s, the school system contained over fifty one and two room schools until late in the following decade. Before that time, the lack of good road surfaces and the low population density of the county made school consolidation virtually impossible. And the limited amount of local scholarship available on the history of education in Clinch County suggests that transportation issues and costs were premier concerns there then as they are now.

Given the poverty of local residents and the general fiscal restraint shown by previous state legislatures in Tennessee, school facilities (as well as professional salaries) remain less than impressive compared to schools in much of metropolitan America. As late as 1965, for example, only four of the county's 28 schools (most of them still non-graded) had indoor plumbing. As mentioned previously, the Civilian Conservation Corps came to the county in the 1930s and built it's first graded school of the twentieth century. And in 1966, with the help of federal monies made available by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act,

this old building was improved and a new high school constructed.

Financial difficulties seen earlier in Clinch County are also quite apparent currently. For example, the school system in Clinch County enrolled just under 1,400 students in 1988, who were taught by 73 teachers in six schools spread throughout the county. Importantly, only two of these six schools contain enough students for completely homogenous age group instruction. These include both the high school and the elementary school in the county seat. Yet, even today the high school in Clinch County would be judged less than a "modern" institution by most: only recently has (one) foreign language instruction been available there, and there are no advanced math or science courses in the curriculum.

The other four county elementary schools lie variously across the county over deep mountain ridges. Enrollment in these outlying schools ranged in 1988 from just over fifty students in the smallest to just under one hundred in the largest. Staffing of the four schools reflects the less than modern arrangements required in a poor and rural county like Clinch. In each of the four outlying schools, between two and four teachers instruct split classes in grades K-8. As well, in each of the county's schools at least one Chapter 1 and one special education teacher is assigned. The only other staff positions not shared throughout the system by the four elementary schools are lunch room staff. County wide, over 80% of the students receive either free or reduced priced lunches.

Financially, the ability of local sources to fund education has actually eroded during the past decade, given the increasing number of services Tennessee state law has mandated for Clinch County. Many counties/municipalities in Tennessee have dedicated increasing property value assessments and the above mentioned local option sales taxes to the operation of their schools. However, the value of Clinch County property has not kept pace with funding requirements for local schools, and increasingly, Clinch County residents shop out of the county (when visiting or coming home for work). Therefore, stable real property values and declining retail sales receipts are claimed by Clinch County leaders to be undermining their ability to fund schools (among other services) adequately. The 1988 school budget of Clinch County was slightly over three million dollars, with just under 60% coming from state sources, approximately 29% coming from federal sources, and only 11% coming from local tax dollars.

Competition for county tax dollars has turned many local County Commission meetings into protracted lobbying sessions by county agencies seeking adequate funding. One result has been that the county school superintendent has turned to the state board of education to compel the local government to provide the minimum appropriation necessary to receive state funding supplements.

Another of the current superintendent's financial schemes in 1988 revolved around his hopes of obtaining federal impact aid for students the system must now educated in the county seat,

since dozens of low income housing units have been completed there. According to him, enrollments in the county seat's elementary school have risen by 20% since these housing units were constructed, and make the district eligible for further federal impact aid under Public Law 81-815.

Much of the time and effort devoted by the county superintendent to running the Clinch County school system in 1988-89 was devoted to obtaining money. We have just outlined two of his efforts directed at state and federal sources. Another undertaking related to obtaining extra school funding for Clinch County involved the superintendent's aggressive support of pending legal action in Tennessee against the state, jointly filed by sixty-six districts, which seeks to overturn school funding formulas as discriminatory and unconstitutional.

However, for purposes of this discussion, a battle over the funding of local services (including the schools) may best illustrate the modern dilemma of being a poor and rural Appalachian county surrounded by a national economy which so dwarfs and controls it.

Funding the School System with Money from the Jail

In 1988, 33% of Clinch County's expenditures went toward funding the local schools, 60% of the county's income went towards the general fund, and 7% went toward payments on outstanding debts. Yet, as in years past, the school system ended both the years 1987-88 and 1988-89 in the red.

Therefore, the years of 1988 and 1989 saw a tremendous push

by the County Commission to find new revenue sources. Furthermore, the Executive of the County Commission has historically been a political enemy of the school superintendent, who is himself an elected official (as are most local school superintendents in Tennessee). And the County Executive spent quite a bit of energy attempting to convince the public that the county's continual financial crises were brought about by the inefficiencies of the school system and its leader.

As in many other rural and poor locales, candidates for public office in Clinch County run primarily on a no-tax-increase platform. Therefore, while most county residents accepted the fact that new dollars had to be raised to pay local school supplements, raising taxes was never publicly endorsed by anyone. Instead, as in a number of other local counties, the housing of state prisoners to generate a positive cash flow was "discovered" by Clinch County political leaders. By building a new jail facility and using the existing sheriffs department to staff it, Clinch County was able in 1988 to net thousands of dollars of new revenue for the provision of local services.

Yet, even the housing of state prisoners could not generate enough money to cover budget shortfalls of the school system. Therefore, the County Executive entered into an agreement with the District of Columbia to house hundreds of prisoners from the nation's capital in the county seat of Clinch County, once a new building could be built for this purpose (adjacent to the just built jail; and backing up onto Clinch County High).

However, this possibility did not go over well with many county residents, as they literally feared for their lives over the coming of what they perceived as hard core urban (and minority) criminals. And the public outcry heard in the fall of 1988 over the jail expansion plan put this project on the back burner - at least temporarily.

At the current time local politics remain heated over the housing of state and D.C. prisoners. The County Executive says he personally is opposed to the whole idea. Yet, he claims that his political enemy (the school superintendent) runs an inefficient system for which all county residents must pay extra. Meanwhile, the superintendent continues to act innocent of all charges of political intrigue and fiscal irresponsibility. Instead, much of his time remains committed to obtaining external funds for running "his" schools.

Professionalism and Modern Education

While the sociological discourse over the composition of modern personalities and/or institutions is not necessarily co-terminus with conceptions of professionalism (e.g., DeYoung, 1986; Lortie, 1978), modern educational institutions must logically call for both instructional leaders and teachers to place high emphasis on universalistic, client centered, efficient, and scientifically informed practice in order to attain desired outcomes. Such claims are, after all, what both mainstream sociologists of education (e.g., Dreeben, 1966) and regional sociologists (e.g., Schwarzeller and Brown, 1960) call

for.

Yet, in our understanding of the dynamics of education in Clinch County, Tennessee, many modern and/or professional school characteristics are visibly lacking. For example, there are no official school board policies in Clinch County: personnel policy, transportation, and purchasing decisions are made on a case by case basis and are frequently reversed. As well, cash for most school supplies, books and furnishings is not supplied by the school board: local fund-raisers coordinated by building principals is their primary source of operating revenue. Furthermore, the proceeds of such fundraisers (frequently totaling thousands of dollars) are controlled by each building principal, not by the superintendent or the board.

Leadership practices in Clinch County also pale in comparison to accepted norms of most metropolitan school systems. For example, while we would suggest that the superintendent of the Clinch County schools is a shrewd and alert individual, his language and concerns suggest preoccupations with gaining external educational resources at least partly directed at enhancing his own political future. Power and influence in Clinch County are importantly won there by being able to have state and federal sources provide funds used to employ friends in the school system and to one-up political enemies.

The Clinch County school superintendent is no "instructional leader": he very rarely reads professional journals; has never heard of "the effective schools movement" (upon which much of the

school improvement plan attempted in the district was based); rarely visits his own schools except during election year or when there is a crisis; is unable/unwilling to discuss educational philosophy in the language of any external professional community; and is more interested in ascertaining how "his" teachers will vote in upcoming school board/county commission/school superintendent races than in what improvements they may be making in teaching and learning. Yet, it is claimed, he is a much more capable and better superintendent than any of his recent predecessors. And he claims to be vitally interested in the best interests of the county's children.

The role/performance of principals, too, are far removed from the avenues of modern professional practice. Helping to sponsor and coordinate school fundraisers in Clinch County takes much time. So too does being the school bookkeeper, part time janitor, and split-classroom teacher. In addition, one of the most important functions of each of the (male) principals at the four smaller county elementary is to coach and provide transportation for the inter-school boys and girls basketball teams. Each of the five elementary schools in Clinch County has at least three teams composed of students from grades four to eight. And these teams practice and play teams from other county schools (and those from surrounding counties) for approximately two thirds of the "academic" year. Most of the time these games are at night (two or three times a week). Sometimes they are played during normal school hours. And typically they are the

most widely supported and admired school function of local parents and the PTOs.

Not surprisingly, Clinch County principals have neither the time nor the encouragement from the central office to evaluate teachers or help facilitate their instructional development. Relatedly, systematic teacher enrichment/development undertakings engaged in either spontaneously or under sponsorship of the county central office are conspicuous by their absence in the case of Clinch County. Part of the reason for this appears to be the comparative lack of professional education courses/seminars offered by the regional community college in the Clinch County area. Except for incentives for professional development made available by the Tennessee Career Ladder program, there appears no systematic local encouragement for the upgrading of teacher skills in Clinch County. The superintendent and several in the central office who run drop-out prevention and sex-equity programs (for example) funded by state and federal monies appeared in our discussions with them to be "going through the motions" in many ways with their curricular initiatives (perhaps with some success): but rarely is there a visible and sustained commitment to school improvement in Clinch County as is at least rhetorically the case in most metropolitan school systems.

Discussion

Internationally, human capital and modernization theories have generated wide-spread policy appeal at the same time as they have yielded systematic skepticism and alternative theoretical

perspectives among academics. Furthermore, human capital formation and the preparation of "modern individuals" has also of late been articulated as the best/most efficient way of developing local economies in underdeveloped areas of the U.S.

Importantly, sociologists of education have assumed that public schools are or ought to be modern/modernizing institutions systematically involved in the preparation of citizens ready for full participation in America's industrial and/or post-industrial society. In contemporary Appalachia, policy makers have also adopted this logic, and have targeted public schools as a central location for human capital formation and the introduction of modern values and motives related to regional economic development. Ostensibly much of the faith of such policy makers has been informed from the sociological writings on the relationship between education and economic development.

Unfortunately, most educational scholarship in the U.S. has ignored the historical, cultural, economic and political circumstances surrounding public education in places like rural Appalachia. Yet, as we have tried to show, such factors remain crucial in understanding the dynamics of schooling in at least one East Tennessee school district. We suggest that common assumptions regarding the modern and professional orientations of teachers, administrators and school boards in many American rural schools are probably misunderstood and/or overestimated by most students of American education.

Rather than assuming that schools are or can be "cultural

bridges" to modernity even in the U.S., it appears quite likely that many rural school systems in many more isolated and economically underdeveloped regions of the U.S. continue to operate in ways not anticipated and/or described by domestic scholars. For example, we would argue that school systems like the one discussed in this essay do not run primarily on (in Dreeben's terms) norms of achievement, independence, universalism, specificity, etc. Rather, tied to more traditional community forms, financially strained by dependence on a poor local economy, racked by political intrigue, and oblivious to most of the professional literature on school improvement strategies, such schools can hardly be expected to equip poor and rural students with either the human capital or modern values theoretically required to enhance either their own futures or that of their county/region/state/nation. If previous students of Clinch County schools have been successful in their economic and social lives, factors other than their exposure to public education may well have been involved. Our own suspicion is that students not related to politically powerful families in Clinch County have been the ones who migrated out to take low paying jobs in surrounding service and low skill industries. Yet, we have no data on such questions.

In any event, our conclusions suggest domestically what others have argued internationally: that modernization models which posit that schools can be an independent force in the development process should not assume that they will be.

Furthermore, our experience suggests that many other (though certainly not all) schools in our region of the country operate in ways quite similar to Clinch County. Which is probably the reason why state departments of education and state legislatures here are continuing to target local schooling practices for reform.

In point of fact, we do not subscribe to perspectives which view schooling as an independent factor in the economic development process. We believe the case study just provided seriously undermines overly optimistic hopes of just this sort. Yet, we recognize that not enough is currently known about the economics and politics of underdevelopment in the U.S. as such factors relate to schooling. And we submit that this lack of serious scholarly attention to the dynamics of school organization/functioning in economically underdeveloped regions of the U.S. could and ought to be more systematically studied and written about by domestic social scientists.

Furthermore, as states increasingly come to view their children as human resources in their competition to enhance regional economies, state accountability pressures on local schools should theoretically increase in almost geometric proportions. Sociologists interested either in more conventional studies of organizational change and/or in newly emerging theories of the state (as it relates to schooling) might well study remaining rural schools in America (e.g., Carnoy, 1984; Wexler, 1988).

We believe the relationship between education, modernization and economic development is much more problematic domestically than many have assumed. There is no guarantee, for example, that county governments and school systems dependent primarily on external funds will ever development "modern" accountability mechanisms and professional systems of action. Furthermore, as school leadership dynamics previously overviewed suggests, the politics of education in (at least) some economically marginal rural schools is worthy of particular attention. In this final regard, the politics of underdevelopment insights provided by C. Wright Mills in the international arena hits close to home:

> It seems to me, two (economic development) problems confront us. One has to do with the political apparatus of many underdeveloped countries. The second has to do with the problem of democratic values. The two problems are interrelated. The governing cliques, classes and institutions in the underdeveloped world often have it very good. Why should they want to change? .... Often the political apparatus of (an) underdeveloped country is full of political capitalists; sometimes, in fact, the governing apparatus is a network of rackets: men (sic) get ahead and stay ahead on the expectation that things cannot be done legitimately. As sociologists, we had better study this sort of thing as an "obstacle." I think it is more important often than the "traditionalism" of indigenous populations, and many other such

problems. Of course, the overdeveloped society is also often a network of rackets, but "the take" is bigger and is spread around more. More people tend to be in on it. (Mills, 1963: 154-155).

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